



Ontario  
Ministry of  
Labour

Handicapped  
Employment  
Program

# Accommodating Workers

CA20N

L

-2010



3 1761 11893806 7

Adaptations

For

People

With

Disabilities

### Fitting the job to the person

Increasing numbers of companies have programs in place that are designed to encourage the employment of people with disabilities.

Initially, some employers believed that, if they were to hire a person with a disability, much effort would be required to adapt a job or workplace to fit that person's needs. They also thought that the cost would be high. They were pleasantly surprised to find out that they were mistaken.

The same holds true for employees returning to work after illness or injury. Reasonable accommodation ensures that your original investment in a skilled worker is retained.

### What does it cost?

Most jobs do not require any special adaptation to suit the needs of employees who have disabilities. Often, the careful placing of people, taking into consideration their individual abilities, is all that is called for. Even when some changes may have to be made, there are usually simple adaptations costing little or nothing. Four wooden blocks, for example will raise the height of a desk allowing a wheelchair user easy access.

When it is necessary to compensate for a physical or sensory limitation, technical aids can be helpful. Only rarely are these expensive and, in most cases, government programs will cover the cost. Like any employer, when you find the right person, the one who fits the job requirements, you will seek ways to maximize effectiveness.

### What are reasonable accommodations?

Something as basic as flexible working hours can be described as a reasonable accommodation. Or, should a person with a hearing impairment have to use a telephone on the job, providing a set with a built-in amplifier at minimal cost is also a reasonable accommodation. There is often a simple solution to every person's needs if you keep an open mind. Many applicants can assist you by suggesting job modifications or other accommodations that have proven helpful in the past.

### The key is flexibility

Once you have found someone who, except for an inability to perform a small part of the job, would be a fine employee, consider making a simple change or adaptation. You will probably find that even a minor accommodation will result in increased productivity and job-satisfaction. Here are a few further examples:

- With the agreement of another employee, trade certain tasks
- Introduce a technical aid to assist in completing the job quickly and effectively
- Redesign the job to reflect what is essential and what could best be handled in another area
- Consider extending a job training cycle

### HEP can help

Consultants from the Handicapped Employment Program (HEP) are available to discuss reasonable accommodations along with other useful steps that you can follow when considering jobs for new and present employees with disabilities.

### Contact:

Handicapped Employment Program  
400 University Avenue, 10th Floor  
Toronto, Ontario M7A 1T7

Phone: (416) 965-2321



Ontario  
Ministry of  
Labour

Handicapped  
Employment  
Program

Honourable  
William Wrye,  
Minister